

**Artigo original**

University-School mentoring partnerships in teacher education: The case of the Maputo Municipality Schools

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ABSTRACT: The paper discusses findings of a study which aims to enhance the support provided by schools to teacher trainees during their school-based component of initial teacher education. The study is part of a wider project with the main propose of strengthening school-University partnerships during the initial teacher education. The project is a collaboration of four Universities in four countries, Mozambique, Malawi, Northern Ireland and Uganda, to share best practices and provide support for University tutors and teachers in schools through the provision of workshops in each country. The first of these workshops was held in at the Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, in October 2010. Six pilot schools were chosen to participate in the mentorship training workshops designed to develop teachers mentoring skills. At the outset teachers indicated their willingness to reflect on and analyze their own practices and to identify areas for improvement. In so doing they were in a better position to assist student teachers in a more structured and systematic way. Through the training program, the concepts of mentoring, teachers as reflective practitioners, the processes of classroom observation, analysis and post lesson feedback discussion were examined using pre-recorded lessons provided by some of the teachers. Findings confirmed the importance of good mentoring and effective partnerships and also highlighted the benefits to be accrued not only by teacher trainees but also by University tutors, mentors, all teachers and pupils. Currently, there is a lack of integration between the University and schools in their provision of support to teacher trainees. Greater cooperative planning can help ensure that teacher trainees have the best possible opportunities to learn from more experienced teachers in schools.

Keywords: mentoring, supervision, teacher trainee, teacher education, student-centred learning

Parcerias de aconselhamento entre Universidades e Escolas na educação de professores: O caso das escolas do Município de Maputo

RESUMO: Este artigo discute os resultados de um estudo cujo objectivo era de analisar o apoio providenciado pelas escolas aos estudantes estagiários durante a formação inicial como professores. O estudo é parte de um projecto grande cujos objectivos são para estreitar parcerias entre escolas e universidades durante a formação inicial de professores. O projecto é uma colaboração de quatro Universidades em quatro países, Moçambique, Malawi, Irlanda do Norte e Uganda, para partilhar boas práticas e providenciar apoio a supervisores das Universidades e professores nas escolas através de *workshops* em cada país. O primeiro destes *workshops* que teve lugar em Maputo, em Outubro de 2010. Seis escolas pilotos foram escolhidas para participarem nos *workshops* de capacitação em mentoria. Em princípio, os professores indicaram a sua vontade de reflectir e analisar suas próprias práticas e identificar áreas que precisam de melhoramento. Deste modo, estiveram em melhor posição de assistir aos estudantes estagiários duma forma mais estruturada e sistemática. Através de programas de capacitação, os conceitos de mentoria, professores como praticantes reflexivos, processos de observação de aulas, análise e discussão da retroalimentação foram examinados, usando aulas previamente gravadas por alguns dos professores. Os resultados confirmaram a importância de uma boa mentoria e de parcerias efectivas, destacando os benefícios acrescidos não só para estudantes-estagiários, mas também para a universidade, supervisores, mentores, professores e alunos. Actualmente, há falta de integração entre a Universidade e escolas na provisão de apoio aos estudantes-estagiários. Uma maior planificação cooperativa pode ajudar a assegurar que os estudantes-estagiários tenham melhores e possíveis oportunidades de aprender, partindo dos professores mais experientes nas escolas.

Palavras-chave: mentoria, supervisão, estagiário, formação de professores, aprendizagem centrada no estudante

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INTRODUCTION

This paper describes the early stages of an international case study involving tutors and teachers from universities in Mozambique, Malawi, Northern Ireland and Uganda who have come together in a British Council funded project entitled *Developing More Effective School-University Partnerships in Initial Teacher Education*. The project is a product of a wider research capacity building initiative undertaken by the Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building of which all four universities have been members since its inception in 2007. It aims to strengthen the support provided by schools to student teachers through developing more effective partnerships between schools and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The work of the project is concentrated on school-based mentorship training (partnerships in learning) for teacher educators and teachers, with a focus on the enhancement of literacy and numeracy skills for learners. More specifically, the project aims to: (i) develop new knowledge and understanding about teacher education partnerships through more collaborative approaches; (ii) support student teachers in schools by identifying effective partnership models to improve the quality of school-based teacher education with a particular focus on mentorship; (iii) enhance the application of student-centred pedagogies in teacher education including the use of appropriate ICTs; (iv) building research capacity in teacher education; and (v) contribute to raise the standards in literacy and numeracy for all learners.

The overall aim of the project is to identify means by which relationships can be strengthened between the four universities where student teachers are registered for their initial teacher education courses, and the schools in which those students undergo their practical experience in order

to ensure that the experience is as professionally effective as possible. School based mentoring of student teachers has been identified as critical, and as a result it will form the key focus of the project.

In operational terms the project involves a series of workshops at participating universities, the first of which took place at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, Mozambique in October 2010. This paper is essentially based on the outcomes of that workshop and some follow-up activities and commences with a discussion of the meaning and role of school based mentoring in initial teacher education.

Student-teacher mentoring defined

To understand the concept of student-teacher mentoring it is necessary to understand the general concept of mentoring itself. In Greek mythology Mentor is the name of Ulysses' friend who was asked to take care of *Telemachos*, Ulysses' son, during his wanderings. In simple terms, therefore, a mentor is a person entrusted with the care of another. While "taking care" has a more passive than active connotation, nowadays mentoring activities are described as activities undertaken by a person (the mentor) for and with another person (the mentee) in order to help the latter undertake tasks and discharge responsibilities more effectively. The mentor is, therefore, usually a person who on the basis of greater experience can advise, coach, or counsel a more inexperienced person so that the latter can become more skilled, and, therefore, more effective in their chosen occupation. The concept and its associated processes are now well known and in use in many professions (Ehrich; Hansford and Tennent, 2004).

In teacher education mentoring is not new. Forms of mentoring existed for student

teachers in Ireland and elsewhere from the early nineteenth century when “model” and “normal” schools were established to exemplify best practice and where “pupil” teachers underwent initial training. Mentoring in such institutions was, however, more of a “do as I do” process rather than the kind of engagement encouraged nowadays with its emphasis on developing a partnership relationship between mentor and mentee. Fischer and van Andel (2002), describe mentoring as “a strategy of individual and institutional support, realized in a learning partnership of two persons and aiming at professional development of school teachers”. More precisely school-based mentoring in teacher education can be summarized as a structured, sustained relationship for supporting student teachers. The mentor is normally an experienced teacher with knowledge of the needs and professional context of the student teacher. The process has a significant emphasis on developing the student teacher’s lesson planning and instructional skills, as well as his/her classroom practice and requires providing regular feedback to the student teacher in a sympathetic manner.

The overall aim of mentoring is to provide support and guidance to student teachers during their school placements in such a manner that their placements are positive professional experiences. Mentors encourage student-teachers to be reflective and highly professional competent educators. In practical terms school-based mentors assist student teachers adapt to a school’s environment; they provide guidance on lesson planning, advice on instructional practices and feedback on performance. The role of a mentor can, therefore, be quite complex - coach, supervisor, guide, counsellor (Porter, 2008; Falk, 2011).

While the mentoring of student teachers can be said to have always been part of

student teachers’ school experience, the recent emphasis has derived from government decisions to require that a high proportion of a student teachers’ course time be school based. For instance, in South Africa, at the Rhodes University Education Department, student teachers spend ten weeks out of the one-year post-graduate professional qualification programme, on teaching practice in schools. This practice is followed and monitored by the subject method lecturers who visit the student teachers at least three times. According to Probyn and Mescht (2001), this procedure allows supervisors to provide support and feedback to student teachers and assess them as “pass” “fail” or “distinction”. In that department a pilot mentoring project on a school based mentoring programme (1) raised the awareness of the subject methods tutors and the communication between subject methods tutors and mentors, (2) showed the relevance of a shared observation, (3) indicated the significance of observation of student teachers performed by mentor teachers, without prejudice of student teaches, and (4) improved the quality of the feedback to student teachers.

At Makerere University in Uganda, there are two internship periods for teacher trainees each lasting 8-10 weeks. In 2002, the School of Education initiated a mentorship partnership with secondary schools through a project whose major goal was to strengthen support supervision and mentorship of student teachers. Although the partnership idea was good, the project appears to have ended prematurely in 2006 due to inadequate funding. However, by the time of its closure, it had made a major contribution to the quality of training of teachers. It is therefore critical that this widely recognized and important aspect of teacher training is revived and sustained by being mainstreamed into the education structures.

In Mozambique, in spite of slight differences in the way the apprenticeship is organized and monitored, according to Chambo and Tembe (2011) the experience from the course on Bantu languages at Eduardo Mondlane University show that there is a close collaboration between university subject tutors and the mentors at teacher education institutions. The students from the university spend one academic year in the teacher education institutions. This period is subdivided into two steps. During the first semester the student teachers are exposed to classroom practices by observing their tutors, while during the second semester they are involved in lesson planning and are responsible for teaching some topics.

Before the apprenticeship period the student-teachers simulate lessons, assess lessons guided by fellow student teachers and attend meetings at teacher education institutions in order to be familiarized with the syllabus. Once a week each student teacher writes a report to be presented and discussed with fellow student-teachers and the subject tutors, and take part in a meeting to discuss issues related to teaching practice. In addition they write a portfolio on their practice for assessment purposes. In this regard, the student teachers select 3-4 topics to be included in the portfolio and agree with subject tutor the number of portfolios to be presented. The portfolio also includes a self-assessment sheet. In order to ensure the quality of the lesson, the subject tutors participate in the lesson planning sessions at the teacher education institutions.

In Northern Ireland, in common with other parts of the UK, students on a typical postgraduate course spend twenty-four of their thirty-six week long timetables in schools. This, of course, means that however effective the supervisory visits by university tutors, students are much more exposed, directly and indirectly, to advice and direction from teachers in their

placement schools. The extent to which such advice and direction is congruent with that from supervisors can be a matter of speculation and, indeed, some tension if relationships between schools and universities are not clearly defined and effectively managed. Recognizing the need for a more explicit and more structured form of support to be agreed between universities and schools has led to the development of the school based mentor's role and, consequently, of the need to prepare adequately for it.

Developing University-Schools partnerships in mentoring

One of the central issues surrounding initial teacher education, for many years is the lack of integration between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and school-based elements of programmes. It is not uncommon that mentors who have responsibility for supporting student teachers know very little about university courses. The approach to teaching practice that has been dominant for many years is that school-based teacher educators are expected to provide a place for student teachers to practice teaching yet they are not usually provided with the kind of preparation and support they need (Valencia *et al.*, 2009). Too often, it is assumed that most of what student teachers need to learn about teaching can be learned incidentally on the job as they progress through their practice. The time that student teachers spend in schools is often not carefully planned and many still do not have frequent opportunities to observe teaching or to receive feedback on their own teaching. Much less evident are the opportunities to get access to the thinking and decision making processes of their experienced mentors (Zeichner, 1996).

In spite of this, there is widespread agreement about the importance of student teachers' access to knowledge about teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2000;

Zeichner, 2002). Learning from the wisdom of practice is perhaps the central issue for teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 40). Often the clinical or practical side of teacher education is fairly haphazard, depending on the availability of loosely selected placements with little guidance about what happens in them and little connection to university work (IDEM). In contrast, in the most effective programmes, student teachers work alongside teachers who can show them how to teach in ways that are responsive to learners and in ways that allow them to assume more independent responsibility for teaching. "Learning to practice in practice, with expert guidance, is essential to becoming a great teacher of all students with a wide range of needs" (IBIDEM). Most classrooms are sites for practice and cooperating teachers or mentors should be trained to become teacher educators. Student teachers learn in all parts of the school and should receive frequent and sustained supervision and feedback. Changing the thinking about teaching practice to make it the central focus of initial teacher education requires that university tutors, schools and mentor teachers embrace a new paradigm shift.

One of the greatest challenges, however, is how to foster learning from "practice in practice". The necessary strategies cannot succeed without a major review of the relationships between universities and schools. No amount of university preparation can compensate for the powerful experiential lessons that shape what teachers actually do. A common integrated vision of partnership is required which includes a programme of high quality school experience or teaching practice, coupled with a supportive learning-focused curriculum. Learning to teach does not merely involve acquiring a body of new practical knowledge but involves changes in cognition and the

perception of how less experienced teachers differ from experts (Berliner, 1987).

METHODOLOGY

Sample and sample size

Four teachers were purposefully chosen from each of the six randomly selected secondary schools in the Maputo City Council area. The teachers were chosen in consultation with the school administrators, and gender was taken into consideration during the selection. In all, 21 teachers of whom 13 were female attended the two-day workshop at Eduardo Mondlane University and a one-day workshop at Francisco Manyanga Secondary School. The attendance in the workshops also involved teacher educators from Eduardo Mondlane University and six tutors from other tertiary institutions in Maputo.

Design of the study

The study used participatory methodologies such as group discussions, brain storming and presentations at the plenary. The Project Team obtained the views of teachers on mentorship and its importance in the professional training of teachers. In this regard, two workshops were organized. The first workshop was held at Eduardo Mondlane University while the second one at Francisco Manyanga Secondary School on the 26 and 27 October 2010 and 30 April 2011, respectively. Parallel to workshops school visits and lesson observations were performed.

Implementing the first workshop

The initial part of the first workshop explored teachers' expectations after a brief exposition of the project goals by the Project Team using participatory methodologies as indicated earlier. The workshop was preceded by a one day discussion of issues related to the supervision of student-teachers during their school-based placements, the aim being to

identify strengths and weaknesses of current practice. During this discussion to which a number of student-teachers, university tutors and a representative of the Ministry of Education contributed, key issues identified included: the infrequency of supervisory visits by university tutors, the lack of clarity as to the role and responsibility of schools in assisting student-teachers, schools' role, if any, in assessing student-teachers and an inconsistent application of assessment criteria. Consequently, the need to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of both school personnel and university tutors emerged as a strong imperative. There was general agreement that the concept of school-based mentors had considerable merit and that the possibility of an accredited module as part of a Master's programme for teachers should be explored.

The teachers did a number of activities intended to identify the characteristics of an effective teacher and the nature of school-based assistance to student-teachers, i.e. mentoring. Participants were asked to note their views on six statements concerning mentoring and choose the one they regarded as the most important. The following were the statements that were rated:

- Mentoring is always the responsibility of the teacher;
- Good mentors require good training;
- Mentoring provides me an opportunity to learn and improve my own teaching;
- The ultimate purpose of mentoring is to assist universities with training to student teachers;
- Observation of classes is the most important part of mentoring process;
- Mentoring takes a long time and my first priority is for kids in the classroom.

Implementing the second workshop

The second workshop was held as a follow up of the first workshop. It aimed to assess

the extent to which teachers were implementing the knowledge and skills on mentoring acquired during the first workshop. Because the teachers showed some misunderstanding about the concepts around mentorship, the first part of the workshop concentrated on clarifying the key concepts relating to the pedagogical practices of student teachers and to supervisor, tutor and mentor roles. Using participatory methodologies, teachers were invited to reflect in more depth about these issues. Other matters relating to the aims, attributes and role of the supervisor, mentor and tutor were discussed followed by facilitator presentations using relevant research literature. The second part of the workshop dealt mainly with the process of analyzing a lesson. This session began with group work where participants reviewed the elements of a lesson, aiming to harmonize the various documents used by the various institutions engaged in initial teacher training activities. Student teachers' evaluation sheets, including the self-assessment sheet, evaluation form of the class tutor and self-assessment document of the student teacher after class were given to the participants to be evaluated in terms of improving and validating its content. The last part of the workshop addressed the issue of assessment criteria. Participants were asked what they would like to see incorporated or reflected in the assessment of the student teacher. The results of all the group discussions were placed on a flip chart and displayed on the wall and all the participants were asked to visit and see the reflections in the other groups. The groups presented the conclusions of the discussions, and consolidated the main objective of the workshop which was to endeavor to harmonize all the procedures used during teaching practices.

Parallel to the two workshops, follow up activities were planned with some principals, directors and teachers between

January and March 2011. Consultations with principals and directors aimed to ensure their effective involvement in tutoring, mentoring and training of student teachers were also conducted.

There was unanimous agreement that a) there must be constant contact between tutors, trainees and schools where student teaching takes place and b) all involved in monitoring, tutoring and mentoring trainees including the principal, pedagogic director and teachers should be trained. Subsequently, training on the following aspects was provided:

- Supervision, tutoring and mentorship;
- Stages and advantages of mentoring and tutoring;
- Role of the tutor/supervisor in the process of tutoring and mentoring student teachers;
- Assessment issues and the nature of classroom assessment.

School visits

The Project Team also visited schools and one technical teacher training institute in order to obtain an overview of student enrolment *vis-a-vis* teacher numbers, and the general teaching facilities/environment. Discussions were also held with the principals of the schools not only to explain the purpose of the project, but also to obtain their views on the project.

Lesson Observations

Lessons were also observed and video-recorded and shared during the workshop. The teachers reflected on the quality of teaching as depicted in the video shows, and how mentorship partnerships could strengthen this. Further discussion about mentoring was informed by video presentations of several lessons from some of the project schools. Following these presentations workshop participants role-played supervisor and student-teacher in order to identify the kind of questions

and issues that can arise in such encounters. This, in turn, allowed some initial discussion of role of school-based mentors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides an overview and discussion of the key findings that emerged from the two workshops organized in terms of the (i) teachers' perceptions of mentoring and its role in strengthening Initial Teacher Education (ITE); (ii) teachers' reflections on mentorship and its implications for the Professional Development of Teachers; and (iii) key issues that influence the University-School Mentorship Partnership Programmes.

Teachers' perceptions of mentoring and its role in strengthening ITE

The first session focused on clarifying and harmonizing the concept of mentorship and related terms. Given the relevance of the theme, the facilitator invited participants to reflect on the meaning of the following concepts: supervisor, mentor and student teacher/ trainee.

In the ensuing discussion it was agreed that during pedagogical practices a **supervisor** is the teacher who comes from the training institution. Regarding the **mentor** it was agreed that he/she is a more experienced teacher, who works at the school where the student teacher is placed during the practicum. His or her main task is to guide, counsel and help integrate the student teacher into the life of the school. The concept of **student teacher** from the beginning was consensual.

In their evaluations of the workshop participants re-emphasized the important role that mentorship plays in initial teacher education. Presented with ten statements regarding the role of a student teacher-mentor, participants pointed out that the roles of mentors include: (i) promoting the professional development of teachers, and (ii) improving the teaching and learning processes as indicated in the Table 1.

TABLE 1: Teachers' perceptions on the role of mentorship in ITE.

Nr	Statement	Frequency
1	Mentoring is always the responsibility of the teacher	1
2	Good mentors require good training	3
3	Mentoring provides me an opportunity to learn and improve my own teaching.	8
4	The ultimate purpose of mentoring is to assist universities with training to student teachers	0
5	Observation of classes is the most important part of mentoring process	2
6	Mentoring takes a long time and my first priority is for kids in the classroom	2

For instances, eight of the responses indicated that statement 3 was the most important, followed by statement 2 with three indicating it to be the most important, while statement 5 and 6 were regarded as the most important by only two participants each and statement one by one. These responses are in line with what other scholars have stated. For example, Huling (1990) describes five basic goals for mentoring: (a) to improve teaching performance, (b) to increase retention of promising teachers, (c) to promote the personal and professional wellbeing of teachers, (d) to satisfy mandated requirements related to certification, and (e) to transmit the culture and practices of the school, and the teaching profession. Practically speaking, mentoring programs show student teachers the profession's commitment to them. In addition a mentoring system also furnishes experienced teachers with opportunities for their own professional development.

The participants highlighted the following weaknesses as an important justification for having the mentorship programmes in schools:

- University-based supervisors and teachers with school based supervisory responsibilities often provide only cursory support to the

student teachers during the letters' placement;

- Teachers sometimes hand over their classes completely to student-teachers;
- Some supervisors only appear at the end of the school practice session to give comments without having observed a single lesson;
- The grading of student teachers is currently the responsibility of university supervisors with little or no input from staff in placement schools.

These comments strongly support the case for improved cooperation between university and school based supervisors and for the development of mentoring programmes that would ensure that cooperation.

Teachers' reflections on mentoring and its implications for professional development of teachers

With the aid of video recordings lessons were analyzed during the first workshop to harmonize the documents used by the various teacher training institutions on which feedback is provided. In this regard, student teachers' evaluation sheets such as, self-assessment sheet of the student teacher and evaluation forms from the University were discussed.

The participants made several observations on the recorded lessons critiquing various aspects of the lessons and the challenges. These included:

- Class management in an overcrowded class;
- How to present criticism of lessons without offending the person who planned and delivered the lesson; and
- How to empower the student teachers so that they develop confidence in themselves and in being able to learn.

After some reflection, the participants came to the following conclusions regarding mentorship programmes:

- Mentorship is interactive, a partnership where all are involved in learning;
- The mentor is not a passive observer. This means he/she must also be aware of the issue under discussion so that he can make a good observation and critique;
- As a mentor, he/she is responsible in helping the student teacher in all aspects of the lesson; and
- Being an experienced teacher does not mean that he/she is a good teacher or a good mentor – he/she needs to be trained to be a mentor.

The participants also highlighted the skills and other competencies that they require in order to make them become more effective mentors. These are listed as follow:

- Clarification of the concept of mentor;
- Guiding, coaching, providing feedback and dealing with student teachers
- Best practices in mentorship and assessment;
- Knowing how to deal with the process of tutoring/mentorship, skills of the mentor;

- Interaction between mentor and student teacher;
- Knowing how to critique taking into consideration positive feedback;
- Knowing how to help student teachers and beginning teacher to plan lessons, use adequately resources that the institution provides;
- Knowing how to be a role model for student teachers;
- Knowing how to plan taking into account cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains;
- Knowing how to develop a professional relationship with student teachers and be a good teacher at the same time.

Key issues that influence the University-Schools mentoring partnership programmes

As internal mechanisms to minimize the problems that arise during the training workshop, participants believed that schools and/or tutors should make known these problems to the School Pedagogical Directorate, and he/she shall prepare a report to be sent to institutions of origin of students. For instance, teachers listed key issues which think they should be considered to promote more effective partnerships between schools and universities as follow:

- The period of student teaching in secondary school should be undertaken in the middle of the semester – not at the beginning of the semester;
- The amount of time for group work should be increased for effective reflection;
- Improvement of the motivation for the interaction between teacher and students and tutor and lecturers is needed;
- Improvement of the lesson plan and the interaction between teacher and

- student is also paramount;
- The student teachers should be sent to school earlier in the semester to allow enough time for them to learn more about practical teaching;
- The methods should be more effective in producing tangible/real results;
- The explanation of the role of the mentors to the student teachers so that the student will be able to collaborate with the student teachers should include a reflection on how the supervisors assess the student teachers;
- The workshop should take place, if possible, whilst student are on teaching practice in order to consolidate learning the role of the tutor and last at least once a week;
- The relationship between university and schools and between student teacher and tutor should be strengthened;
- Issues on how to be a successful tutor and how to deal with the student teachers and how to be a good professor should also be taken into account.

These initial findings and recommendations have re-emphasized the important role of mentors for beginning teachers as critical for their early professional development. As more teachers enter the profession, mentors will increasingly assume a greater role as one way to assist beginning teachers' right from the training institution and to make their "landing into the market softer". Staff developers now see mentoring as a valuable process not only for beginning teachers but also for teachers who have taught for a long time and serve as mentors (Sparks and Horsley, 1990; Fessler and Christensen, 1992).

The Mozambique experience of partnership has demonstrated that the school mentors, supervisors, and other stakeholders need to

understand the importance of the mentorship programmes for both the student teachers, beginning teachers and university supervisors. The participants emphasized that mentoring is important for the professional development of the teacher, particularly the initial teacher education. They were of the view that at present many student teachers seem to be left alone in schools with the university supervisor just coming occasionally. Because the student teacher spends more time at school with the mentor, it is important to empower a mentor to assess, and not just mentor the trainees into education professionals. In other words, the partnership between universities or HEIs and schools need to be re-examined for greater effectiveness.

Much of the early writing on partnership in the context of teacher education concentrated on the respective roles and responsibilities of school-based staff and higher education tutors, on mentoring and on levels and models of cooperation and collaboration between HEIs and schools (Wilkin, 1992, Kerry and Shelton Mayes, 1995). The involvement of schools and the nature of partnerships in ITE can take different forms, with schools and HEIs assuming distinctive but complementary and collaborative roles. Brisard, Menter and Smith (2005), in the introduction to their report on models of partnership, drew attention to two main ways in which partnership is conceived in ITE. The first relates to the use of the term to reflect pedagogic and curriculum theories about the nature of learning to teach. The second refers to the use of the term to describe particular arrangements for the delivery of ITE, such as resourcing matters, roles and responsibilities. These two perspectives, while distinctive and necessarily complementary, represent the conceptual and structural issues which underpin the development and implementation of partnership arrangements. Maandag *et al.*

(2007) provide a useful framework for characterizing university-school partnerships, based on a five country cross national study (England, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Sweden). They describe how these partnerships vary along a continuum from the school playing a host role (work placement model) to one where there is shared responsibility between the school and the HEI (partner model) with the school providing the entire training (training school model).

Prevailing partnerships arrangements tend to assume that HEIs and schools are essentially different institutions, with each giving access to different forms of academic and professional knowledge. While this may be the position, there is clearly merit in joint dialogue, planning and implementation in order to provide complementary provision based on the collective expertise and experiences of both. Universities provide access to theoretical and academic knowledge based on research and to the synthesis of a broad range of indirect practical experience. Schools, on the other hand, give access to “situated knowledge of teaching and schooling” (McIntyre, 1997, p. 5). At the core of the rationale for partnership teacher education is a focus on pedagogical models of professional learning and development and contested notions about the nature of professional knowledge, including the relationship and interaction between theory and practice and between the academic and professional or practical elements of learning to teach.

While the teachers in the workshops understood the role played by mentors in professional teacher development, they asked for training in mentorship. The skills that they sought included the process of mentoring particularly how to give feedback to the mentee, empowerment of school teachers to assess student-teachers, and changing the mind-set of experienced

teachers so that, as mentors, they could provide an opportunity for both themselves and mentees to learn and to grow professionally.

The school-based component of training should be organized in such a way as to encourage the student teacher to observe, explore, formulate and test out ideas and evaluate ways in which these might be achieved, with careful guidance from a mentor teacher. A “mentor”, “coach”, “cooperating teacher” or “critical friend”, whichever term is adopted, is someone who “...provides support, challenge and extension of the learning of one person through the guidance of another who is more skilled, knowledgeable and experienced, particularly in relation to the context in which learning is taking place (Pollard, 2008, p. 32).

Mentors are, therefore, in a unique position to be able to support student teachers as they begin to form concepts and gain insights into the practical aspects of teaching, what Schon (1991) refers to as “guiding their seeing”. The importance of reflection on teaching must be to learn something wider and of greater significance by making the tacit explicit. Through helping the student teacher to understand the underlying implications of working in particular and different ways, mentors can encourage the formation of patterns of thinking. Student teachers typically go through a number of distinct phases of development when learning to teach, beginning with students gaining confidence in classroom management. Maynard and Furlong (1995) distil three rather distinct and progressive phases from the literature: the apprenticeship model, the competence model and the reflective practitioner model, describing each as partial and incomplete.

The reflective practitioner model of mentoring demands moving beyond routines and rituals, and encourages

student teachers to progress from a focus on their own teaching to a focus on pupil learning and on ways in which they can make the learning process more effective. Central to this approach is the ability to critically reflect on and analyze practice both individually and collaboratively. Assessment, too, might be linked to these different phases, to reflect the different stages of development, including the range of skills a competent teacher will need, the ability to think more deeply about issues that impinge on practice, the capacity for reflection and evaluation and the professional qualities of working within a community geared to the learning opportunities of all children irrespective of age, ability, gender or social background.

Since student learning needs are developmental it follows that effective mentoring requires the adoption of a range of different pedagogical strategies at different stages of development. The sheer complexity of classroom processes means that at the earliest stages students are unable to “see” in order to focus on particular competences. At this stage collaborative teaching where students can model themselves on experienced teachers are likely to be far more effective than systematic training. Shulman’s research (1987) concluded that teachers engage in progressive cycles of thought, involving comprehension, transforming, instructing, evaluating, reflecting and forming new comprehensions of teaching- a constructivist perspective which connects thought and action (Elliott and Calderhead, 1995). Induction, therefore, needs to be gradual, carefully monitored and closely supervised. The goal should be to assist student teachers to gain confidence in exploring the teaching strategies appropriate to different situations, testing ideas and developing their own distinctive styles, while at the same time engaging in systematic evaluation and the acquisition of skills and habits of reflection which will

form the basis of future professional development. Student teachers should also be initiated into a form of life beyond the classroom, a community in which there are professional responsibilities and within which classroom practices need to be understood, in summary acquire a wider professional perspective. What happens in the classroom cannot be disconnected from school policy or from the social context of the school. The school, therefore, should be an environment in which such exploration and testing is encouraged.

CONCLUSIONS

The Mozambican experience has shown that although teachers widely recognize the importance of mentorship, they have differing views on the concept of mentorship and need to enhance their competencies in order to effectively mentor trainees. It was also concluded that mentoring is being done at various institutions but in a rather non-structured manner, thus making it difficult to assess their effectiveness and to ensure quality in all institutions. Furthermore, once teachers are provided with the necessary training, they are willing to put their skills into practice. However, for this to be effective, some constraints need to be overcome such as building a consensus on the timing and duration of the practicum for student teachers, assessment of trainees by both the teachers and University tutors, and other forms of facilitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the initial experience of the project, it is recommended that the training of teachers in mentorship be formalized and the course accredited by the partnering universities as a way of not only improving the quality of initial teacher training, but also empowering the teacher. This will ensure sustainability. Secondly, it is recommended that the issues that adversely affect the effectiveness of University-

School mentorships be resolved. These include the contribution of teachers' assessment to the overall grade of the teacher trainee, clarification of the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders such as universities, school inspectors, the education officers and head teachers. Lastly, it is recommended that the Mozambican experience be further analyzed and compared with that of each of the other partnering institutions so as to forge the way forward for such a critical venture in the education of teachers.

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